

7

158

.5

S72

1880



F 158  
.5  
.S72  
Copy 1

---

THE  
REPORT  
OF A  
COMMITTEE OF ONE,  
ON THE OFFICIAL LIFE  
AND ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE  
HON. WILLIAM S. STOKLEY,  
MAYOR  
OF THE  
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.

---



THE  
REPORT  
OF A  
COMMITTEE OF ONE,  
ON THE OFFICIAL LIFE  
AND ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE  
HON. WILLIAM S. STOKLEY,  
MAYOR  
OF THE  
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.

---

1880.

11

12

## PREAMBLE.

---

In a vital political crisis like the present, it is the pressing duty of every good citizen to perform his full share of the labor necessary to secure the people a safe delivery from the evils by which they are imperilled. In the body politic, as in all other bodies afflicted with a malady, the organs or parts affected are those requiring treatment. Amputation of a well arm, will not benefit a crushed foot; nor is cod liver oil an especially happy remedy for dyspepsia. Indeed, it is very risky business to doctor a patient when the disease cannot be located; therefore the first great care of the skillful physician must be to form a correct diagnosis.

The writer, having within the past ten years, visited every important city in the United States, except one, considers himself capable of forming a reliable opinion upon the soundness of municipal administrations. For the purpose therefore, of aiding his fellow citizens to determine the exact condition of the executive department of our city government,—to ascertain whether it is as diseased as some of the others seem to be,—he resolved himself into a Committee of One, and gave this subject a careful examination.

He is not an office-holder; has never held any public position except as an U. S. Army officer; nor is he seeking such distinction; neither has he ever sat in a political convention, but is simply one of those despised and rejected "fools" whose "errand" is to find where Reform is needed at home.

In justice to all concerned it is necessary to explain, First;—that this Review is published without Mayor Stokley's knowledge or consent. Secondly; that the writer although having a slight personal acquaintance with his Honor, has never met him but casually, nor a score of times in all. Thirdly; that the facts collated herein have been obtained from public records, newspapers, officials, and some of the nearest confidential and personal friends of his Honor,—without any individual suspecting or being informed of the use intended to be made of the information. Fourthly, after a searching investigation, the writer most emphatically believes and asserts, that his narrative is so literally true that its statements cannot be controverted; and, finally, he begs a full, attentive, and unprejudiced perusal of it, in the sincere hope that his earnest effort in behalf of good government, may result in at least helping to secure it!

COMMITTEE OF ONE.

PHILADELPHIA, December 6th, 1880.

Source unknown



THE REPORT  
OF A  
COMMITTEE OF ONE  
ON THE OFFICIAL LIFE AND ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE  
HONORABLE WILLIAM S. STOKLEY,  
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.

---

CHAPTER I.  
CITY COUNCILS.

WILLIAM S. STOKLEY was born April 25, 1823, on Spruce Street, above Tenth, in the city of Philadelphia. Financial misfortunes, resulting from over-confidence in other men's integrity, immediately preceded and probably hastened his father's death.

Then he at once entered on the role of hero, in the well-worn story of the self-made man. Not a selfish ambition, but a mother to care for, and a younger brother and sister to educate, was the generous spur that urged him to success. Proud of his social and political achievements, as all men who have conquered the world without assistance naturally are, he yet possesses the exceptional merit of desisting from perpetually blowing his own trumpet: nor does he forever invite attention,—like an ill-bred child whom accident has marked with old and painless sores,—to the scars that tell of friction with misfortune. When he entered public service he had built up a flourishing business on Eighth Street below Arch, and was as pecuniarily prosperous as he is to-day, if not more so,—which same can hardly be said with truth of all our public servants. And it may be well to add, that the income he then commanded

was so moderate, that to relinquish all hope of its further increase in order to promote the general welfare of his fellow-citizens, either showed an abnormal disregard for the pleasures and powers of wealth, or indicated a self-sacrificing patriotism that in these latter days is phenomenal; so rare indeed, that the principal cause of all our political trouble arises from allowing men who would starve to death at anything else, to make a business of politics.

When, therefore, the citizens and tax-payers of the Ninth ward solicited Mr. Stokley to represent them in the Common Council, he cheerfully consented, and was elected a member of that body in 1860. His influence for good was immediately felt, and he continued to acquire the increased confidence of his constituents and the respect of his colleagues; the former, demonstrated by his successive re-elections; the latter, by his being chosen President of the Council in 1865. Two years later, in 1867, he was sent to leaven the Select branch, and was made its President in 1868. Here he first gave a remarkable exhibition of that executive ability to which the people of Philadelphia have become so familiar, that their experience of its benefits has come to be such a routine matter of course, many of them seem to underestimate its value. Some years before this date the Volunteer Fire Department had achieved its maximum usefulness, but, since then, had been so rapidly retrograding, that its original ambition—the rescue of endangered life and property—was perverted to practically result in the destruction of both. Older citizens need only be reminded of the horrible ruffianism which it bred, nurtured and protected under shelter of law,—to again fully realize the importance of the undertaking which effected its abolition,—and to appreciate the genius to whose discernment, discretion, coolness and valor, they owe its destruction.

Except those Sunday papers, whose principal revenue was from advertisements of Firemen's Balls,—press, pulpit and platform were unanimous in demanding a change of the system, but as the system was securely fortified behind an immovable mass of conservative cowardice, and controlled mighty political power, for either offensive

or defensive operations, these attacks were futile. Work, and not wind, was needed. Councils had the undisputed authority to abolish it, but who would be sponsor for the necessary Bill,—especially in that lawfully conservative body, the Select Council, a large majority of whose members were known to oppose a change—deeming it too sweeping and radical. Many of the members of the Common Council had just been elected under pledge to fight for one, and the others had been wise enough to be benefited by Councilman Stokley's training when he led that branch,—so the defenders of the Volunteers relied wholly on the Select Branch, whose members had come in under the old regime, and whose constitutional dignity was largely dependent upon their capacity to ignore public clamor.

Whatever might be the ultimate result of the attack,—and the chances were dead against success—every probability pointed to the political annihilation of its *leader*: therefore he must be a man of extraordinary courage; and fear of the vengeance which threatened all sorts of violence, from the desperate ruffians and criminals, who fattened as parasites upon the old organization, would have deterred any but a physically brave man. President Stokley realizing the importance of the emergency, and the necessity for delivering a blow with momentum which would confound and confuse by its unexpected aggressive force, decided to present the Bill himself.

The scene in the Select Council Chamber on that 21st day of November, 1867, was one to lastingly impress the most callous spectator. Members and privileged friends crowded the floor, and the galleries were literally packed with the champion roughs, rowdies, and blackguards of the city's slums. As soon as the course of routine business permitted, Mr. Stokley, designating a temporary speaker on whom he could depend for necessary co-operation, left the chair. The confusion, which had been increasing during these proceedings, had become a veritable tumult. When he took the floor and announced the object of the Bill he proposed, such a terrific uproar ensued as would have startled even pandemonium; cat-calls and

curses, howls, hoots, groans,—growls and yells and shrieks,—made the old Cradle of Liberty tremble with very indignation! Every form of vituperation, menace, sneer, and threat, that the language can express, was hurled at the stout-hearted hero. There was no retreating for him now; he was not there for that purpose either: he had burned all his bridges behind him; had weighed all the risks, and was ready to accept his probable fate: there he stood,—calm, cool, and quiet;—the champion of right, because it was right!

After this demonstration had partially exhausted itself with its intensity, President Stokley raised his voice, and in tones which told of inflexible purpose, commanded instant and continuous silence under penalty of employing his official prerogative to clear the galleries by arresting the offenders. Most likely astonishment and curiosity, as much as fear, induced quiet. He then not only read the Bill, but followed it by a ringing speech in which the demand of the community for law, order, and justice, was so forcibly presented, and the warning from the audacious outbreak they had just witnessed, so solemnly urged, that his eloquence and pluck carried his colleagues with him, and the Ordinance passed. Notwithstanding commendations and congratulations poured in from all sides, yet the prophecy was in everybody's mouth, "That's the last of Stokley!"—but it wasn't.

While President of the Select Council, he also attempted to discount the present Reformation, by uprooting the great upas of defilement before its increasing pestilence bred the rottenness which now sends up so rank a stench that even our neighbors murmuringly complain. He had lived long enough in this mixed and mysterious world, to notice that human nature makes curious developments in a majority of men, if the conditions are only favorable. For instance, men who, in their individual characters, are as upright and honorable as men can be, when joined together in a corporate body, seem to acquire a license to perpetuate any amount or degree of rascality with perfect impunity, so far as their personal consciences are concerned. By some psychological metamorphosis, they seem to be morally blind to the slightest connection

between iniquities committed by the body as a whole, and their responsibility, as integral parts of that whole. Having been for many years a member of the Presbyterian Church, and trained in its doctrines and precepts by the Rev. John Chambers, his ideas on the subject of accountability, were strictly orthodox: the prayer "Lead us not into temptation" was, therefore, second to none in importance in his creed. To be sure, there are temptations which strengthen and purify some characters,—so there is fire that cleans and burnishes some materials, but these are rare exceptions, and the number in each class is small;—indeed, with the best of them, it is only a question of time and intensity, until the test brings torture and tarnish and utter destruction.

Removal of temptations and construction of safeguards, are all-important aims to be attained by law-makers. Councilman Stokley was expert in the application of this principle; from attentive and careful study of the subject and close observation, he had reached the conclusion that the people had no right to select a dozen men,—of not more than ordinary mental calibre, not distinguished for the possession of an inordinate amount of virtue,—give them exclusive possession of a reservoir into which millions of dollars poured every year; leave them to manipulate this treasure at their own sweet wills; requiring no security; exacting no accounts; making them responsible to nobody; give them no compensation; and then expect them to remain immaculate: had no right to allow them, while rarely deigning a pretext, to spend as much as they pleased of this untold wealth to buy any commodity from brains to ballots, and then howl with horror at political corruption; had no right to invest them with absolutely despotic power over an immense army of servile vassals, and then expect them to discover no selfish ambition! But the people, who fired-off their patriotism once a year with their Chinese crackers, could not spare time enough from the great national every-fellow-for-himself-go-as-you-please race after the almighty DOLLAR, to ascertain whether perfect men—such as might be entrusted to execute such an imperfect law—existed or

not. Therefore, as perfect men were not available, the loose law, which fathered this monstrosity, must be altered; and, on January 16th, 1868, he caused to be introduced, in the Common Council, an ordinance (prepared under his personal direction by his own private counsel,) which provided for the transfer of the Philadelphia Gas Works to the city; for their subsequent care and management under a Department of Gas; for the election of the Chief Engineer by Councils (who should nominate such other officers as were necessary, by and with the advice and consent of the Select Council); and for the transfer of the Sinking Fund to the city. On the 23d of that month it passed the Lower Chamber, and was immediately sent to the higher, where, on the 30th, President Stokley called it up, and pushed it through a third reading, under a suspension of the rules, to a final passage, by a vote of 23 yeas to 3 nays. February 1st it received the mayor's signature and became a law. Here we have a noted instance of his fidelity to the people's interests, not manifested by passive vigilance, but by brilliantly planned and masterly executed aggressive movements,—which, in more modern times, is ideal Reform.

The most dangerous result of the supremacy of this Oligarchy sprang from the unlimited extent of its influence: the first aim of every and each office-seeker was to secure it. Whether his aspirations climbed for a seat on the Supreme Bench, or, only a School Directorship was the height of his ambition, he knew his case was hopeless if our masters said nay. Likewise through the entire range, those officials who were anxious for renomination or re-appointment, felt comfortably well satisfied when occasions arose in which, by singular coincidence, but usual good fortune, the requirements of law and interests of the Oligarchy were mutually conserved through their agency. Of course there were exceptions to this, as to all rules, and they were found, as now, emanating from the most intelligent portions of the community. Councilman Stokley was continued in the municipal legislature just as a Caven or a Hunter is returned to-day, and the parallel does not end here; he was the master spirit that

originated and guided many reforms, some of which can never be surpassed, if equaled, as examples of patriotic heroism, or in the incalculable and lasting good they have brought upon the community. But often he only secured a host of unreliable allies, who were always ready to make any sacrifice for the public weal—when it did not interfere with their own individual interests (!)—and again, after guiding them through the enemies' outposts, he frequently found, before anything of real importance had been effected, that treacherous defection or impregnable obstacles left him alone, with his labor and pains for his only reward. It was so in this daring attack on the Gas Trust in 1868, which appears to have been entirely forgotten. They were completely surrounded, captured, for a fact,—and yet set at liberty without disarmament,—without parole,—and why? History says they employed the most eminent legal talent in the profession to present their appeal to the Supreme Court, and so ably was the inviolability of the Trust set forth in the cases of *Allen vs. City*, and *Hilles vs. City*, that the Court did not deem it even necessary to file an opinion, but simply referred to a decision in a somewhat analogous case, known as that of the “Western Savings Fund,” thereby affirming the city had no right to interfere with, or control its own servants.

[If the gentlemen of the Councils' Committee, now in session, have any real desire to depose this Oligarchy, or even to investigate its transactions, they can better employ their time and labor, and the people's money, than by marching over the same ground of attack that William S. Stokley so thoroughly scouted twelve years ago. The enemy is invulnerable at that, as at every other point but one. Taken into a Court of Equity to disprove alleged breaches of trust, they can there be *compelled*, and there only, to produce all the papers and persons that may be essential; and if the oath-bound evidence elicited, substantiates the rumors and charges which have so long been anonymously circulated, the Trust, or, at least the Trustees, will no longer be a burden on the City (?). If the allegations are disproved,—and no one should make greater efforts to facilitate an unimpeachable

demonstration of their falsity than the Trustees themselves, if innocent,—it will be shown they have been patient victims of wholesale libel and abuse. By all means, then, let the matter be settled in the only one effective way, and when the Trust gets into Court, if the City Solicitor has been a man properly selected, and the Court administers justice, this disgraceful scandal will be effectually squelched.]

The arguments which have been given as determining President Stokley's course in relation to the Gas Trust, and the reasons defining the logic of his action, are his own; and it is authoritatively asserted that time has only intensified his conviction, that the present system is prolific of great mischief to this community.

It is one, which allows men whose only attainment is supreme impudence, to be eligible as managers of an immense scientific manufacturing enterprize; it puts them in possession of fabulous amounts of money without requiring one penny security, thus imposing an unwarrantable temptation to malfeasance; it ignores the tax-payer and maintains a close corporation; it holds the latter responsible for all obligations these men may see fit to incur; and, in providing for the establishment of a powerful oligarchy, it perpetrates a paradoxical absurdity, whereby the servants of a sovereign people become its absolute and despotic masters,—a usurpation, inimical alike to the constitution and fundamental laws of the country, state, and city.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### MAYOR.

It is not the province of a brief sketch like this, to elaborate details. The record of a man capable of introducing, and successfully carrying through, the measures to which especial reference has been made, is necessarily one of pride to his constituents, and grateful memory to his fellow-citizens. That it was appreciated, his selection to the highest office in the gift of the people, is conclusive evidence.



William S. Stokley was elected Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, October 10th, 1871, and was inaugurated on the First day of January, 1872. He was re-elected February 17th, 1874, for a second term to begin on the First day of January, 1875. He was again re-elected, February 20th, 1877, to enter his third term on the First day of January, 1878.

No fair estimate of Mayor Stokley's efficiency can be made without allusion to the many and serious disadvantages under which he began his administration. It is doubtful whether Philadelphia contains a citizen more highly respected, or worthier of his reputation as a genial, upright and honorable Christian gentleman, than his immediate predecessor; yet, naturally gifted as he is, with so many of those qualities which characterize the perfect man, his lack of a single talent, totally unfitted him for the Chief Magistracy. During his term of office, wrong was rampant, vice flourished, riot ruled, lawlessness raged, and crime held high carnival; it was an epoch of which memory shudders. Not a block in any of the principal thoroughfares of the city but contained one or more gambling hells, and, in many cases, the upper rooms in an entire square, were devoted to this vice. They scaled down in increasing ratio from the gilded halls of Faro's court, to the lowest grog and policy shop. Prostitution was advertised by glare of gas, and crash of brass; so shameless were the indecencies publicly practiced in resorts on two of our most fashionable streets, that their notoriety became national, and their pernicious example felt in every State of the Union. All grades of thieves, from the sneak to the highwayman, were allowed to ply their vocations without fear of punishment. Riots were of frequent occurrence and alarming fatality. Elections, in many of the wards, were a mere farce. Plunderers and blackmailers, roughs and rowdies, masqueraded as policemen; and often openly instigated and assisted their less favored pals, in breaking peacefully-disposed citizens' heads, or into their houses; instead of being a terror to evil-doers, they were a scourge to law-abiding people; instead of being a safeguard to inoffensive men and

women, assassins, thieves, and harlots, depended upon their protection. Philadelphia had more nearly reached the horrors of the Commune, than, pray God, it ever may again.

William S. Stokley was inaugurated as Chief Magistrate, and the conflict for the rescue of the good people of the city of Brotherly Love, at once began.

He had used the interval between the date of his election and his official instalment, in thoroughly organizing an effective police force. This was completed with such skill and energy, and attention to the minutest details, that, at the same hour he took the oath of office, his new appointments—having reported at the various station-houses to which they had been assigned—were sworn in, and at once marched to their respective beats.

In calling attention to a few of the more important struggles in the war which Mayor Stokely has since continuously waged for the maintenance and preservation of good government, but a cursory glance at the tables appended, will convince the most prejudiced reader that only ceaseless vigilance on his part, is the price of the people's liberty. Although occasional brilliant displays of genius, or particular feats of heroism, either moral or physical, may sometimes be shown by a man of ordinary ability, under accidentally favorable circumstances,—it is only one rarely gifted with the talent to plan, force to execute, and wisdom to discriminate, who makes every emergency an additional victory. There were many vicious nuisances, and novel indecencies, the existence of which had not been contemplated, when the criminal code of the commonwealth then in force, was framed, and the Mayor at once concentrated all his personal and political influence, to have the statutes revised. To his efforts we are mainly indebted for many of the supplementary enactments restricting the sale of liquors, the employment of waiter girls, alleged public amusements, the summary arrest and imprisonment of professional thieves,—and many others which have from time to time been passed during his administration, as their necessity became apparent. This, too, in the face of

bitter opposition, not only from the avowed lawless classes, but also from the law-making body itself. It is a burning and shameful disgrace to the State, that for years, the standing committee of the Pennsylvania Legislature on Vice and Immorality, has been composed almost entirely of rum-sellers and political roosters of the most depraved sort. The result of this "*joke*,"—as it is called in Harrisburg,—is manifest, on every attempt to make more emphatic those prohibitions enacted to limit any description of immoral traffic; either by open resistance, fatal delay, or, in many cases, the introduction of some clause, proviso, or amendment, which practically neutralizes their intended effect.

Meanwhile, however, existing laws were strictly enforced, and it was not long before our prisons began to fill up; they soon became inadequate to accommodate criminals whose careers had received a sudden check: many thousands of whom hied to more congenial climes. All gaming resorts were voluntarily closed or forcibly broken up; gamblers were arrested, tried, convicted, and punished, irrespective of age, color, present or previous condition.

Some of them, backed by men who had cheated the people into loading them with political honors; others, counting on the abuse of personal friendship and influence; others still, fortified behind immense bank accounts; directly promised or threatened, or appealed, or, indirectly offered bribes, and made use of every means that subtle address, ingenious cunning, and unscrupulous determination could devise: but the solemnest threats, most beseeching entreaties, allurements to tempt ambition, and weighty pecuniary considerations, were alike futile. Fortunately for Philadelphia, its Chief Magistrate was neither a clever knave, nor, what is still worse, an honest fool; but an able man of sterling integrity. Some went to jail, some went to Jersey, some went to work,—but they all left off public gambling.

There is a class of criminals really as dangerous to the security of property as the thieves themselves, for without them the inducements to commit these felonies would be confined to the exceptional motives

of poverty or revenge. They are those who provide a market for the plunder obtained, and are called "fences." Depredators having no opportunities for disposing of their swag, and receiving no return for their risky adventures, soon give up the business or migrate to more encouraging localities. Thoroughly convinced that this was a fact, one of Mayor Stokely's first moves was to break up these fences, scattered as they were throughout the city, plying their trade with bold effrontery. In order to do this more effectually he not only made their vocation one of great danger, but also made it unprofitable.

The authorities of every city, town, and village, in the world exercise more or less leniency towards that common failing of human nature, by which the victims almost universally exhibit more concern for the recovery of their property than for the punishment of the robbers; and the larger their losses, the greater is their anxiety to comply with any terms the criminals may propose. This compounding of felony he had also determined to break up. The detectives he found in the force were notorious as nothing but skillful and successful go-betweens, who were always able to secure a portion of the stolen property, but never the thief;—a kind of reward brokers;—proprietors of an official exchange through which the spoiler and despoiled were heavily mulct, the one for immunity from punishment after the principal evidences of his guilt had gone, the other for asking no questions concerning what belonged to him. All but four of these valuable officers were at once discharged, and a peremptory general order issued, directing that all efforts should be concentrated on the capture of the thieves, and not of the property;—that any detective discovered compromising or attempting to compound with a criminal would be instantly dismissed. In a few weeks two more were removed, and but two now remain on the force.

The severity of these measures, and the summary banishment of these friends at court, created the greatest consternation among the fraternity, which was aptly climaxed by another order—that, amplified, subsequently became embodied in one of the laws just referred

to, (known as the "90 days' law") which arrested on sight all grades of professionals, from the youngest pickpocket to the oldest burglar, and sent them to the House of Correction. This master stroke not only caused the dispersion of much local talent, but the certainty of being incarcerated immediately on their arrival in the city,—before they had a chance to even plan their depredations, caused Philadelphia to be carefully avoided by all the criminals in the country.

In June, 1872, less than six months after his inauguration, the Stokers and Helpers employed by the Gas Trust, made a demand for an increase of wages; it was refused: threats were made, and violence menaced; serious trouble was expected. The next day after the final refusal, four hundred of them congregated in the vicinity of the Market St. Works, organized a strike, and were marching to those located on Callowhill Street, to persuade or force the men there to join them, when they were met by the Mayor at the head of a posse of police. He halted them, arrested the ring-leaders and dispersed the rest without ceremony. No riot acts were read, no eloquence wasted. He then took possession of the vacated works, protected green substitutes who were speedily engaged, and managed the whole business, so that the city did not lose a dollar by destruction of property, nor its citizens a moment of light. Everybody had conceded one or two nights of total darkness, with its consequent alarming dangers, if the resolution of the Trustees was adhered to, and everybody was surprised and rejoiced at this new method of dealing with mobs,—notwithstanding their Chief Executive so compromised the dignity of his honorable office, as to personally lead his officers, and not delegate the danger and authority to some subordinate.

During this year the increased effectiveness of the police force was shown by the large number of arrests, which aggregated 40,007; and the weeding out process is evident, from a decrease of some 10,000 commitments the following year. Reference to Table II. will practically explain how greatly improved the moral con-

dition of the city was, after the energetic renovation, instituted by Mayor Stokely immediately on his assumption of power.

Among the civil acts of the Mayor in 1873 to which notice is called because of its relation to the recent excitement on that subject, is a message sent to Councils, September 9th; which directed attention to the illegal issue of medical diplomas, and asked the passage of a resolution requesting the Attorney General of the State to proceed against the "Medical University of Philadelphia."

That bogus doctor mills, which have been of incalculable harm to our renowned colleges of medicine and surgery, and the disgraceful cause of foreign official complaint to the general government,—were allowed to continue their villianous frauds for the past seven years, is not the fault of our Mayor.

Another message, sent October 30th, in this year, is worthy of note, as another illustration of his prescience. Preparations were being made for the approaching International Exhibition, and numerous applications were submitted for the erection of temporary frame houses; the Mayor's warning said: "Every additional wooden building will be a tinder box needing but a match or a cigar light, to endanger the whole neighborhood, and I do solemnly conjure you to forbear."

The Police Department began the year by contributing and collecting \$23,413.33 in aid of Exhibition. Long before the latter opened, criminals of all grades began to infest the city, reconoitering their prospective harvest—fields: confidence schemes of unparalleled ingenuity were essayed; numerous attempts were made to import the highest developments of European vice; a bribe of a quarter of a million of dollars was offered to secure the establishment of a single gambling house. But the nature of the proposed Exhibition, or the character of our Mayor had been woefully misjudged. This tidal wave of iniquity he successfully dammed with the assistance of but three hundred extra policemen, who were on duty for seven months in the year.

It would be superfluous to remind any one then resident in Philadelphia, of the marvelous success achieved by William S. Stokley in preserving peace and good order, and security to life and property;—the time is too recent; the achievement too stupendous! Every nation there represented has testified with most honorable mention, of his ability, zeal and integrity. No feature of that great Exposition, which so astonished the civilized world, approached in grandeur or approximated in interest, the exhibit of this republican management of promiscuous millions. No matter what his future career may be, Wiliam S. Stokley, Mayor of the City of Philadelphia during the Exposition of 1876, will have the homage of grateful praise as long as history remembers the nation's first Centennial.

When the festivities were at their height, on September 9th, there occurred an emergency which fulfilled his reiterated prophecies, and placed every living person who had even the slightest interest in the success of this Anniversary, under profound obligations to him. About four o'clock in the afternoon of that date, a fire broke out at Elm and Tishner streets, and spread rapidly among the wooden shanties and houses which surrounded the Main Exhibition Building. On the first alarm, the Mayor hastened to the scene and superintended the efforts made to conquer the conflagration. For some time, owing to the direction and velocity of the wind, it raged furiously, greatly endangering the Main Building; but after consuming twenty frame structures, the fire was got under control and then speedily quenched.

The preceding April, in vetoing an ordinance for the erection of a frame building on Elm Avenue, between Fortieth and Forty-first Streets, he again called the attention of Councils to his Message of 1873, already alluded to, but neither warnings were heeded, and the result was as he anticipated, although not so serious as he had feared. There were quite a number of these buildings yet remaining in this vicinity, liable, at any moment, to start another blaze and imperil the Exhibition; he, therefore took the dilemma by the horns and mastered it in his usual fashion. A thorough personal examina-

tion of those still standing, convinced him they ought to come down; consequently, on September 12th, the owners or tenants occupying Elm Avenue were served with notices to remove their shanties within forty-eight hours, or they would be demolished by the police at the expiration of that time. Some of these parties applied to the Court of Common Pleas, and, on the 14th of September, preliminary injunctions were granted restraining the Mayor from further proceedings in the matter. Ninety-nine men out of a hundred would have then considered their responsibility as assumed by the Courts, and any interference on their part justifiably at an end, but providentially the odd man was in the right place at the right time. The case was pressed vigorously, and, on the 18th of September, the injunctions were dissolved. The following day found the Grand Jury visiting the locality, and, on the 20th, they made a special presentment to the Judge then presiding in the Court of Quarter Sessions, in which they stated that the frame structures on Elm Avenue, between Fortieth and Fifty-second street, were dangerous, alike to life and property, and were a public nuisance. In a few days twenty-seven wooden buildings were either removed by their owners, or razed by the police under the personal supervision of the Mayor.

Toward the close of the Exposition, he directed extraordinary exertions to be made to protect the property on exhibition, especially that displayed in the Main Building. The night force was strengthened, and orders given to search closely, all vehicles passing in and out of the grounds,—to examine suspicious bundles carried by persons leaving by the several gates,—and to permit no one to approach the fence during late hours. The officers and men about the Exhibition Buildings were greatly stimulated and encouraged by his daily presence in the different parts of that District, and, as one high in authority, and a close observer, wrote, “public peace was preserved as if by miracle; and the phenomenal spectacle was presented to visitors, of hundreds of thousands of people congregated without injury or turbulence!”



In July, 1877, a general strike of railroad employees on lines in the Eastern and Middle States, culminated in a serious riot at Pittsburgh, which, through the sympathy born of local prejudice against the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and the treason, cowardice, or inability of that city's municipal officers,—was allowed to become unmanageable. The city remained at the complete mercy of mobs until rescued by U. S. troops. Millions of property was destroyed or stolen; a mad revel of murder and arson, sacrificed many human lives; the city was irreparably disgraced, and is now being taxed to pay for the wanton damage permitted.

The morning of Friday, July 15th, found the Mayor seeking recuperation at Long Branch: the strike in Pittsburgh had at that time resulted in a suspension of travel, but nobody dreamed of its leading to the serious disorder which followed. He took the first train home and reached here about 11 A. M. Every hour had been bringing more alarming news from the Smoky City, so, after a hurried visit to his office, he went to the West Philadelphia Depot of the Pennsylvania Company. Already crowds of idle and unruly men had assembled in the vicinity of the depots and shops. Massing a large force of police in the neighborhood, ready for instant service, he established his headquarters in the Passenger Depot,—and awaited developments. They came;—came fast and fatal. Regiments, companies, detachments of the National Guard were hurried west as quickly as they could be got ready; on Saturday more followed; despatches recounted the ravages of the rioters. Anticipating their effect on the vicious classes, he caused a number of special patrolmen to be sworn in, that he might concentrate a sufficient force of his tried men on the west side of the Schuylkill; every point was guarded; strategic movements were made, and ceaseless vigilance exercised. Saturday night and Sunday morning took away all the city's National Guard, and brought worse and worse news from the scene of disaster: the State troops were attacked and routed; the only effect they appeared to have on the mobs, was to change their fun to fury.

Meanwhile there had been several skirmishes with the immense crowds that had gathered on and about the property of the Railroad Company, and had become impudent and stubborn;—but clubs were still trumps in our game.\* Monday was a field day for the police, who, marshaled by the Mayor, not only broke the heads of the rioters, but the backbone of the riot, when it was yet just old enough,—to be squelched.

On Tuesday, the 19th, his Honor left the depot for the first time since Friday. That no blood was shed, that no property was destroyed, that no bills were to pay, that no encouragement was permitted in Philadelphia for such develtry as dishonored Pittsburg, thank William S. Stokley, Mayor!

Quick to learn the lesson of the emergency, he immediately consulted with Col. Whittemore, commanding the U. S. Arsenal at Bridesburg; opened telegraphic communication with his headquarters; arranged for a co-operation of his police with the few soldiers stationed there; borrowed enough regulation rifles to arm the municipal force; drilled them in off-duty hours until army officers declared them as proficient as regulars; waited till peace and order had been restored throughout the entire country: and then, but not till then, went back to Long Branch to find what was left of the vacation he had lost.

That his marvelous success in dealing with mobs is still to be depended on, the late disturbance on election night, in Broad Street, is convincing evidence. As soon as the marching column was attacked, the Mayor rushed into the midst of the melee from the Union League Club House, before the squad on duty in the neighboring station house got on the ground. With the assistance of the comparatively few policemen, who had been detailed to regulate the crowd, disorderly persons without regard to political affiliations, were summarily dealt with; and hundreds of eye witnesses will testify that to his presence alone, is due the preservation of many imperiled lives and limbs, and the escape of the Americus Club House from being thoroughly gutted.

---

\* For explicit details, see Addenda, page 46.

So much for his peace-preserving power. Illustrations of it might be repeated indefinitely, but are not necessary to influence any judgment worthy of respect or attention.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### VARIETY THEATRES.

There are classes of men—the women are all of one class—in every large city, who crave suitable food to satisfy their abnormal, beastial appetites, and their patronage, supports what are known as low variety theatres, music halls, free concert saloons, and similar resorts of alleged amusement. Elderly roués, fast young men, and the more degraded laboring youth, frequent them; they are also rendezvous for the lower orders of criminals and lewd women. Their success depends upon the indecency of their exhibitions, or the facilities provided for encouraging illicit sexual intercourse. Their effect upon the community is immoral, vicious, sinful;—on neighboring properties, disastrous,—by lowering particular assessed values, they increase general taxation—they are a scourge and a curse to society.

No one more fully realizes these facts than Mayor Stokley, and he has used his utmost power to rid the city of them, but, he is beset with insurmountable difficulties. Let us examine some of them. In the first place, their alleged purpose is lawful; and, until last year, he has had no discretionary power in licensing them;—indeed, it has only been within a month that that power was clearly defined. In the spring of 1878, a license was refused to one, Miller, the proprietor of a vile resort on Vine street: the Mayor was taken into court on a mandamus, and Judge Mitchell decreed that the Act of March 30th, 1868,—under which the application had been made,—left the Mayor no discretion in the matter; and he was directed to issue the license, or, in other words, legalize the performance, whether he wanted to or not. Miller therefore continued his establishment, but, heeding the implied warning, has shrouded the indecency of his place with such a semblance of respectability, that it has not cropped out until

within the past few days. Immediately after this failure the Mayor held a consultation with the law officers of the City, which resulted in the drafting of a bill to supersede the objectionable statute. A high officer of the department went to Harrisburg to personally explain and press the measure: it was finally passed,—but with a proviso appended by the Vice and Immorality Committee, to which attention has already been called,—which greatly neutralized its effect, making affidavits of interested opponents practically necessary, and permitting an appeal, which shall be final,—from the Mayor's decision to the Court of Quarter Sessions. Yet, even under this defective law, he has just prevented the opening of a low theatre on Arch street; and the Community may rest assured that hereafter, every indecent resort that shames this city, will exist solely because of the interference, and on the responsibility of, the Court of Quarter Sessions.

Secondly:—Whenever these nuisances are raided, it frequently happens that the elderly roués are men of political influence, or that the fathers of fast young men have sufficient respectability to shield their sons from public disgrace, or, as has occurred, the pecuniary backers of the managers are politicians of wealth and power.

Thirdly:—Courts are loath to admit, juries slow to believe, the testimony of policemen; they allege that no matter what other qualifications they possess, they generally testify too much or too little; and the opposition and interference of the Department, unsupported and unassisted by reputable private citizens, has too much the air of antagonism to democratic principles. It is very doubtful whether the Arch street enterprise would not have eventually succeeded if the interested owners of property in the vicinity had not given the Mayor all the assistance in their power, and implicitly followed his instructions.\*

Fourthly;—it requires more open violation, and flagrant disturbance of the public peace, than is generally found in these places,—to justify a raid. Yet, in spite of all these and other obstacles, Mayor Stokley has accomplished the destruction of the worst of these dives, and secured the conviction and punishment of some of their proprietors.

---

\* See Addenda, page 45.

## CHAPTER IV.

## SUNDAY LIQUOR LAW.

There is a general law of this Commonwealth, having an universal application, which the great majority of our people cheerfully obey and always have respected. Years ago a certain class infringed it from purely selfish considerations, to such an extent that stricter measures were enacted to secure its enforcement. From time to time, these were found inadequate, so more specific laws were made, imposing heavier punishments and severer penalties. The antagonism between Society and this particular Class, has grown in bitterness up to the present time; the former resisting the establishment of a privileged order in their midst,—over whom the law is powerless,—and equally bent on guarding its weaker members as far as can be done within constitutional limits,—from the degrading influence of their opponents: the latter, with superior energy, evading and defying any interference which would retard the more rapid accumulation of wealth by the individuals who compose it. That this Class is allowed to exist in open rebellion against supreme authority, is therefore not for want of legislation; indeed, almost every year renewed attempts are made to re-vivify and invigorate practically dead letters. Consequently, the responsibility lies with our administrative officers.

Were the effects of this lawlessness confined to the pernicious example that its toleration in a pure democracy involved, it would be sufficiently vicious to excite alarm; but when it directly, tends to abase and harm, and indirectly, but no less powerfully, to incite its victims to other and more serious misdemeanors and felonies, it becomes a crime of fearful gravity against Society.

The retailing of intoxicating liquors on Sunday, is general throughout the city: formerly, whatever of this traffic was carried on, was done with all possible secrecy and caution, to avoid detection and certain punishment: at this writing, Sunday brings the most profitable business of the week to many tavern keepers. The statutes prescribe

severer penalties than ever before, the great mass of the citizens deplore and condemn more earnestly, and yet the rum-sellers unconcernedly ignore all restrictions, appeals, or threats, and continue defiant with that calm insolence which always characterizes "Privileged Classes!" The people know all this, but too well, and naturally demand of the Chief Executive Officer of the City, in no gentle tones, *why these laws are not enforced!* They do it in Churches, in Halls, and through the newspapers, and by petitions. But the Mayor only attends one church; and is disqualified by that same high office which he holds, from answering through the press. When, however, petitions are perchance submitted to him by the petitioners in person, or a delegation from them, he explains; and the explanation is apparently so satisfactory that the agitation ceases,—until the next election comes around. Meanwhile, those uninformed, doubt, distrust, condemn, and abuse him, with gross injustice, for he is not only as innocent as they from all responsibility for this great evil, but as powerless to prevent it; suffering at the same time a pain they have not risked—that of the mortification of failure in most earnest efforts to crush it. Again and again have these law-breakers been arrested, but so indifferent and insolent have they become, it is an actual *fact*, that after entering bail—which is always ready—they give the matter so little further attention, they rarely take the trouble to go to court when their cases are called for trial:—if proceedings ever get that far!

The following incident illustrates several features of the present outrageous system which thoughtful men will do well to ponder over: In one of the most respectable neighborhoods in a resident section of the city, there is located a liquor saloon, the proprietor of which had been particularly impudent in his violation of the Sunday laws, and the Mayor, after first sending him a peremptory order to close his place,—without the slightest effect—took especial precautions to establish several direct and positive infringements; he then arrested him, insisted upon and secured his trial, and the man was—*acquitted*.

Shortly afterwards a gentleman, well known and highly respected,

called and made an earnest complaint against this same person. He said the congregation of the Church he represented,—and of which he was a leading member—situated but a short distance from the tavern in question, was seriously annoyed and scandalized every Sunday, by the shameless manner in which this rum-mill was run; and that, while on their way to and from divine worship, he and his family, and his neighbors, were compelled to hear infamous and obscene language from the loafers who regularly assembled there. He, therefore, insisted the law should be executed, and the nuisance stopped.

After describing his own failure, the Mayor asked him to put himself to a little trouble by making a personal effort;—to go to the saloon on the next Sunday, call for liquor, drink and pay for it, and then on Monday, sue out a warrant for the proprietor's arrest. He promised to do so, and, on the next Sunday, carried out the plan to the smallest detail. The proprietor was arrested and bound over for trial; the gentleman who made the complaint attended Court continuously, at serious inconvenience to himself and neglect of his business, in order to testify, but the case did not come up. Day after day, on one pretext or another, or none, it was postponed; but still he was there ready and anxious, until one morning, after about six weeks of this farce, he was compelled, by an imperative engagement, to absent himself from the Court-room for a few hours. During his absence the case was called, the man tried (?), and, for lack of evidence, acquitted.

Now the secret of all this chicanery, or at least so much of it as may dare be exposed, is this:—The retail liquor dealers belong to an organization known as the Liquor Dealers' Association; this Association employs as *permanent* counsel, lawyers of tried ability and influence, who possess means of obtaining any information that may be useful to their clients, are always watchful, alert, and command ever-ready resources; they stand an invincible guard, impassable to blinded Justice.

Whenever they are ready for trial, they get it,—and an easy victory; whenever they want delay, Dame Fortune leaves her

wheel and leads her hoodwinked Sister on some merry chase until, by some chance accident, she trips and falls. The stumbling-block may be, as in the case just cited, the absence of a material witness, or it may be,—something else; as happened just one year ago, in twenty-nine cases reported in the *Evening Bulletin* of Saturday, November 22d, 1879, as follows:—

#### ALASKA STREET.

---

##### THE RECENT RAID—THE SUNDAY LIQUOR SELLERS SET FREE—THE BILLS IGNORED—WHAT THE CHIEF OF POLICE SAYS.

---

Mayor Stokely has made repeated efforts to get rid of the nuisances existing in what is known as the Alaska street district, but he does not seem to be properly sustained by the officials who take charge of matters after he has done his duty. The great cause of most of the degradation of the people in that section of the city is the existence of numerous small taverns, which, perhaps, ought to be designated as “rum holes.” In these places the vilest kind of liquor is sold at prices ranging from one to five cents a glass. Then there are what are known as “cheap lodging houses,” where lodgings and liquor are to be had, and then again, not in Alaska street but on the outskirts, are the more pretentious saloons where better customers obtain better liquor.

The late raid in that district was carefully arranged by Chief of Police, Samuel I. Givin, under special directions of Mayor Stokley, and was made with a special view of abolishing some of the existing evils. Twelve careful officers were selected from the different districts. They were disguised in clothes similar to those worn by the residents in that locality, and went through the district and bought liquor on Sunday, it being notorious that nearly all the places do a very large business on that day. This was evidence against the tavern-keepers, and upon it the warrants were issued. The raid was made. A large number of persons were captured. The result was that many of the poor, miserable creatures arrested were sent to the House of Correction and the tavern-keepers were held for trial. The returns were made to the District Attorney and indictments were drawn in the usual form, charging the sale of liquor on Sundays. Yesterday these bills were all returned by the Grand Jury marked “Ignored—County to pay the costs.”

#### THE BILLS IGNORED.

The following is a list of the bills “ignored,” with the names of the witnesses and the bail for the defendants:





## A SURPRISE.

The announcement in the BULLETIN of yesterday that the bills had been ignored was a great surprise to the Mayor, Chief of Police and other officers engaged in the raid. It was supposed that the evidence was complete, and that "true bills" would certainly be found by the Grand Jury. The action of the Grand Jury is very mysterious. An examination of the indictments showed that opposite the names of the witnesses, except in one instance, was an X. Inquiry among the officers of the District Attorney's office as to this X brought forth the information that it meant that the witnesses had been examined. Every witness on all the bills, except one, were so marked, and on that particular bill there were no check marks. All of the bills bear the signature of Wm. J. Swain, foreman.

Mayor Stokley, in speaking of the matter this morning, said: "*I do not know what to make of it. My officers were all reliable men. The public and the newspapers have often demanded that I shall suppress the Sunday liquor traffic, and all of my efforts have resulted in the same way as this last raid in Alaska street.*"

Chief of Police Givin said: "*I cannot account for the action of the Grand Jury. Although I was in command of the raid I was not summoned as a witness, nor was I notified to send the officers before the Grand Jury. It is always customary to notify the Chief of Police when officers are wanted either in court or before the Grand Jury.*"

The District Attorney is the law officer who is charged with the presentation of cases for trial, and it is the District Attorney who also prepares and conducts all indictments submitted to the Grand Jury; and, being the authoritative representative or agent of the Court, and the official exponent of the law, the latter rarely disregard his advice or instructions. Why the proper witnesses were not called when these cases were before the Grand Jurors, may, perhaps, be explained by a desire on the part of the District Attorney to limit the costs which the County were mulct, to a minimum: had true bills been found, and the accused gone into Court, they would have been acquitted of course, and then the expenses would have been much heavier. It may however, not have been a question of money. Perhaps, perchance, the distinguished bailors were able to establish the immaculateness of their companions and friends, the bailees! At the least, the latter

were fortunate in possessing such eminent sureties as Squire McMullin and the other politicians of the lower regions——of the city.

These cases to which reference has been made, are not exceptions; the same inviolable rule governs the disposition of all of them when members of the Liquor Dealers' Association are the defendants.

Even when these violations of the liquor laws reach Court and are submitted to a jury, the same objections to police testimony exist, as were mentioned in reference to alleged variety theatre cases, and in a still more aggravating form; for insult is added to injury, by allowing witnesses to be ridiculed and bullied beyond all reason. In order to secure legal evidence, the officers detailed for this duty, are obliged to drink and pay for intoxicating liquor; and this fact affords an excuse and alleged justification for unlimited abuse from the counsel for the defense. For instance, they are compelled to answer questions similar to these:—

“How do you know you drank whiskey?”

“How do you know what you drank was intoxicating?”

“How many times have you ever been drunk?”

“In the past (year, or month or week)?”

“How do you know when you're intoxicated?”

“Do you consider yourself a good judge of rum?”

“How long have you been practicing?”

“How many drinks does it take to make you drunk?”

“How many drinks did you take at each place, and how many places did you visit?”

“Did you go home on a shutter, or a wheelbarrow, or did you lie in the gutter all night?”

“Why weren't you arrested?”

“Who paid for this drunk?”

“Has the condition of morals reached such perfection in the good city of Brotherly Love that Mayor Stokley hasn't any other use for his policemen than to send them off on toots at the expense of the taxpayer?”

These are only ordinary samples of the interrogatories thundered or sneered at the best set of men who ever filled the positions they hold.

Then there is a roaring and ranting about "conspiracies," and "set up jobs," and "validity of evidence!" The average juror takes it all in, and lets the prisoners go.

So it has come to pass, that the Mayor declines to detail his patrolmen on this demoralizing, degrading, and useless duty. When the *three hundred cases and more, which are at this moment pigeon holed in the office of the District Attorney of the County of Philadelphia*, are disposed of in some other way than by the statute of limitation, his Honor will feel justified in again opening a crusade against the omnipotent rum sellers!

Friends of the Temperance cause, and all other good Citizens! Now that the truth of this matter is clearly and explicitly brought to your knowledge, do you not think justice, reason, and fair play, demand that you should change the invocation that heads your petitions, and pray the District Attorney? Or, better still, the Courts themselves, that they shall direct their prosecuting officer to perform his duty?

The gentleman who has just been chosen to fill that responsible position, is not accountable for the neglect of his predecessor; but whenever you find the grog shops of this city in full blast on Sunday, go to him and demand the number of untried cases for this offense, he has upon his docket! If there are none, then, but not till then, petition the Mayor. Nor is it sensible or right, gentlemen, to blame him for refusing to allow his officers to swill rum under a pretext of duty, when nothing but their own inevitable demoralization is effected thereby! Let the District Attorney of this county prosecute—and prosecute to convict—the offenders against these laws which are brought before him, and you may rest well assured, fellow-citizens, there will never be occasion for another petition while William S. Stokley is Mayor of Philadelphia!

## CHAPTER V.

## PRIVATE OFFICIAL ACTS.

The moral courage, force of character, soundness of common sense, and impregnable integrity, which have distinguished our present Mayor during his official career to an unprecedented degree, are exhibited not only when sure to earn the plaudits of the people, but they no less govern his private magisterial acts. Friends nor foes, power nor poverty, influence nor enmity, threats nor tears, can change his course one jot or one tittle, when the rights of the City are in question, or the efficiency of its police liable to be affected.

The commanding officer of one of the Districts recently reported through the proper channels, that a certain street passenger railroad company was about to lay an extra track along a short distance of their route. The Mayor immediately sent orders to the contractors to stop their preparations. In a short time a message was received from the President of the company, that "it was all right! The Commissioner of Highways had given him permission to go ahead." But the Mayor replied that, "the Commissioner of Highways had no more right to give you permission to build, than I have to allow it to be done . . . ." Within an hour after receiving this message, the President, accompanied by one of the other officers of the company,—men whose authority in street railroad matters is only exceeded by that they exercise in municipal and State politics,—personally visited him, and endeavored to convince him, as they had the Commissioner of Highways, that this supplementary track would not only accommodate them in particular, but the community in general; but,—while His Honor expressed deep regret at being compelled to disoblige the public,—he remained inflexible, and the street in question as yet contains but two rails.

When the late Clerk of Quarter Sessions was so badly hurt in a fracas on Eighth Street, he had no idea at the time that his injuries were so serious, and made light of the matter to the patrolman who came to his assistance. The latter, influenced probably by the political

standing of the participants, as well as the protestations of the victim, made no report of the occurrence to the proper authorities. He was summarily dismissed the force, and neither the solicitations of intimate personal friends, nor of politicians, nor the urgent and unanimous petition of the storekeepers on Eighth Street along the line of his beat, were able to induce the Mayor to reinstate him, even conditionally. This was an extreme case, for the man had a most honorable record as a trustworthy officer, and the circumstances were somewhat extenuating; but discipline required his punishment, and its effect has been most salutary: any infractions of law or order are now reported with even less fear or favor than before; because official decapitation is sure to follow any neglect, with the certainty of fate itself.

The great superiority of our police is due to the discriminating judgment exercised in their selection; the efficiency of the probationary term for substitutes; the strictness of discipline maintained throughout the force, and the existence of an *esprit de corps* which elevates its morale, and supplements discipline with zeal; which latter is due to the knowledge the men have, that as the Mayor holds them to a strict accountability,—with equal exactness does he hold himself responsible for them to the City.

From the Chief,—schooled to command in a score of battles,—a colonel's commission his diploma,—down to the lowest substitute, each man knows his position depends solely on the efficiency with which he performs his duty; and what is the consequence? Life and property are to-day, better protected in Philadelphia, and at less expense to the taxpayer, than in any other city on the globe.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### VETO POWER.

That prerogative of the Chief Magistrate of the municipality, which gives him the veto power has been exercised by Mayor Stokley with judicious firmness after careful investigation into the merits of

the several ordinances submitted. No appropriation for money to be expended, ever becomes a law, without a thorough examination into the exigencies and necessities which are alleged to require it. The economy shown in the management of his annual disbursements, which a glance at Table IV. will illustrate, characterizes his watchfulness over all demands made upon the Public Treasury. Instead of using up, on various customary pretexts, all of the comparatively small amounts appropriated, or creating even an occasional deficiency—as is general with many of the other Departments,—he has returned a balance each year.

One of his earliest veto messages, disapproving a claim for work alleged to have been done in the construction of the Cohocksink sewer, contains this announcement:—"Contractors should be given to understand that they will be held to the agreement they make with the City, and that the City will honorably discharge all just demands made upon the Treasury,—and nothing more. For these reasons I return the Bill for re-consideration." And this principle has governed his course ever since in the liquidation of all claims.

His opposition to the erection of frame buildings, has already been adverted to: his thorough inspection of ground proposed to be purchased for public purposes, and comparisons of prices, has prevented much wasteful expenditure: frequently his investigations into the character of contractors or sureties, have revealed records justifying a refusal to intrust them with any further confidence or responsibility: he has never consented that a dollar of the people's money should be disbursed, for which, he has not been fully satisfied, the city had received a just equivalent; nor approved the making of any loan for the necessity of which he has not had his own private judgment confirmed, by the general and hearty recommendations of our leading citizens, and those who bear the heavier part of the burden of taxation.

In discussing this function of the Magistracy, it is deemed pertinent to notice the only objection that has been offered to William S. Stokley's administration, by even the most hypercritical of the new

order of reformers, for it is just such frivolous, ill-timed, and ridiculous nonsense, that brings discredit upon the noble endeavors of the most useful and patriotic men in the community, when they attempt to check the abuse of political power and the prostitution of public office. Fortunately, these super-sensitive grumblers are few, and the people are so thoroughly in earnest in their determination to rid themselves of all manner of dictation, that they will command little attention; especially, as the facts inspire grave suspicions concerning the sincerity of their motives.

No complaint is made of dereliction in any duty but that of the exercise of the veto power. They admit that he is the best Head of the Police and its accessory Departments the city has ever had; they admit that he has caused Bills to be introduced, and, through his energy and influence made laws,—of great benefit to the community; they admit that he is not only honest but zealous, and capable, in using his legislative prerogatives in all questions but that of finance; they even go so far as to express their willingness to create a new office—in which he can exercise his peculiar and rare abilities,—*provided one of their number be installed as Mayor!* And for what purpose? To dictate to the people, through their direct representatives, what financial operations they shall, or shall not, consummate!

They allege that through his failure to veto ordinances creating loans, the City was loaded with a debt so enormous that the Legislature of the State had to be asked to interfere,—which it did, prohibiting any further increase; and that, if it had not been for this enactment, the City would shortly have been bankrupt! Very good, gentlemen. Before examining your allegations further, however, permit a suggestion that you can now allow your anxious souls to rest in peace. The law is passed,—it is operative,—the Treasury is safe,—and neither Mayor Stokley, nor Councils, can swamp the City's credit,—*and*, the necessity for that new office, gentlemen,—is removed before it is created!

In the first place, no one more heartily endorsed and aided



in securing this Legislative restriction than Mayor Stokley himself: in the second,—these financial schemes are practically exempt from the veto power,—always have been, and so should be: third,—the loans made were justifiable.

(1.) The Mayor thought, with every other sensible citizen, that the debt was already large enough, and should be reduced before any additions were made to it; enough absolute necessities, and legitimate comforts, had been obtained to last for a long while, and sufficient to satisfy all reasonable people until they could better afford to pay for more.

(2.) In relation to the veto power *per se*, it cannot be denied that judicious tardiness in its exercise, is imperatively demanded by the spirit which pervades all our principles of government: the authority thus vested, is the least democratic of all those which distinguish a Republic: the People are supreme; and have therefore, always been more or less, justly jealous of this concession. Their direct representatives form the popular, or Lower House or Council, in which those most important of all Bills,—the Appropriation—must originate,—and this provision implies a suspicion that they ought to know whether they need money or do not need it. A second body is also chosen to form the Upper Council, and, on the supposition that their fewer number and more lengthy term of service, will add dignity and deliberation to their legislation,—they are presumed not to be influenced by the echoes of fickle clamor which reverberate from the Lower Branch, in response to popular hue and cry. In order to facilitate business and proportion labor, the different measures proposed are referred to Committees, which should be composed of those members most fitted to grasp the several subjects to be considered: the Finance Committee requires the ablest men, and those most experienced in money matters,—and, generally gets them. Now note the *modus operandi*:—A financial measure is proposed and is referred to its proper Committee; there it is thoroughly investigated and two reports are made, one from a majority, another from the minority; three

separate times,—at intervals not less than that fixed by law,—the Bill comes before the Chamber for discussion; it is finally passed and, after another legal delay, is sent to the upper House. There it goes through a precisely similar process with all its careful delay and hesitating routine. At length it passes that Body, and is ready for the approval of the Executive, to make it a law.

It is possible to slip a measure of minor importance, through both committees and both Houses, without attracting especial attention; or, it may be disguised so as to hide its real import;—therefore it is incumbent on the Executive to exercise constant vigilance. But to expect him to set his individual opinion up, against the careful judgment of those who have been especially chosen to determine such matters;—and this too, after delay upon delay for the purpose of allowing the people themselves, as well as official representatives, to investigate its merits,—is worthy of the men, for whom, our form of government is not good enough! Diligent inquiry and research, has failed to discover a single instance, where the President of the United States has vetoed an Act of Congress authorizing a loan; and no party,—with brains enough at command to be called “political,”—has yet had the temerity to put forward a candidate whose only qualification for the position, was his ability to say “no,”—when he ought to say “yes.” Before that time comes, it is probable that some higher power will interfere to forbid Congress from legislating on finance,—or any other subject,—so that the place may be more congenial to his peculiar talents.

(3.) Lastly;—let us see what this borrowed money was squandered for; and to those who are alleged to have been especially benefited,—the reader is prayerfully recommended for further testimony as to the necessity of each:—

1. An Ordinance to authorize a Loan for school purposes, \$1,000,000. Approved, 25th day of June, 1872. Respectfully referred to the President of the Board of Public Education,—every parent, and every patriot.

2. An Ordinance creating a further Loan for the construction of

a Bridge over the River Schuylkill, at Fairmount (Callowhill Street), \$200,000. Approved, the 25th day of June, 1872. Respectfully referred to the citizens and taxpayers of West Philadelphia.

3. An Ordinance to create a Loan for the building of a Bridge over the River Schuylkill at Girard Avenue, and for the construction of Culverts, \$2,138,000. (1) For Bridge, \$1,500,000; (2) for Culverts, \$638,000, including the Cohocksink extension. Approved, the 14th day of October, 1872. (1) Respectfully referred to every man, woman, and child who heard that Bridge complimented during the Centennial, or has since heard it commented on by strangers, (2)—to the Board of Health, and the patients of every reputable physician in the city.

4. An Ordinance to create a Loan for the further extension of Fairmount Park, and for the improvement thereof, \$1,800,000. Approved, the 21st day of October, 1872. Respectfully referred to the Park Commissioners, the tax-payers who own horses or carriages, and the people who cannot afford to patronize summer resorts.

5. An Ordinance to authorize a Loan for Fire purposes, i. e.;—the purchase of ground and the erection of Fire Stations, \$200,000. Approved, the 26th day of October, 1872. Respectfully referred to those who judge the Paid Department an improvement over the Volunteer system,—which change made this loan necessary.

6. An Ordinance to authorize a Loan for the further extension of the Water Works, \$970,000. Approved, the 23rd day of November, 1872. Respectfully referred to all Residents north of Vine street.

7. An Ordinance to create a Loan for the erection of Buildings in the Park for the National Exhibition, \$500,000. Approved, the 30th day of May, 1873. Respectfully referred to the subscribers to the Centennial, and those who were pecuniarily unable to take Stock.

8. An Ordinance to create a Loan for the building and equipment of a City Ice Boat, \$225,000. Approved, the 19th day of May, 1873. Respectfully referred to the Chamber of Commerce, and Philadelphians doing business with, or resident in Camden.

9. On Ordinance to create a Loan for School purposes, \$1,000,000. Approved, the 30th day of December, 1873. Respectfully referred as in Loan 1. "Education of the masses is the safety of the Republic."

10. An Ordinance to create a Loan for the establishment of a House of Correction, \$450,000. Approved, the 30th day of December, 1873. Respectfully referred to the people who elected the Legislature that *commanded* Councils to create this Loan, and apply it to this purpose.

11. An Ordinance to create a Loan for the further extension of the Philadelphia Gas Works, \$1,000,000. Approved the 16th day of November, 1864. Respectfully referred to Residents and Property owners of the newly built and lately improved sections of the city, and those of the old suburban townships. [This Ordinance contained a proviso:—"that nothing herein contained shall interfere or obstruct the City of Philadelphia in taking possession of said Gas Works, whenever the Councils of said City shall determine by ordinance to do so." So there is one million at least invested with the Trust that the City has some control over!] ]

12. An Ordinance to create a loan for the building of Bridges in the City of Philadelphia, \$335,000. Approved the 15th day of June, 1875. Respectfully referred as in Loans 2 and 3.

13. An Ordinance to create a Loan for the building of Main Sewers, \$500,000. Approved the 13th day of July, 1875. Respectfully referred, as in Loan 3,—with a reminder that building improvements then completed and projected, had been increasing at a phenomenal rate;—and that old sewers, not being built of rubber or other elastic material, cannot regulate their capacity with the increase in the number of factories, and the five and six-storied buildings which are replacing old-fashioned houses without stationary stands or water-closets.

14. An Ordinance to authorize a Loan for Police purposes (2) extinguishment of Ground Rents, and (3) for an improved system of Fire

Alarm Telegraph,—\$380,000. (1) For the purchase of ground and the erection and extension of buildings for police station houses, \$165,000. (2) For paying-off Ground Rents on Station-house lots, \$15,000. (3) (This appropriation, \$200,000 has since been repealed.) Approved the 4th day of December, 1875. Respectfully referred to every reasonable and reasoning business man.

Total, \$10,498,000, for Schools, Bridges, Sewers, Park, Water, Centennial, Light, Navigation, and riddance from the Volunteer Fire Nuisance. The last item alone, is worth all this money. And any property-owner, or head of a family, who can conscientiously withhold his approbation from these expenditures, will find himself greatly benefited by a few years' residence in Boston, New York, Chicago, or San Francisco.

There is a wide difference between responsibility for the peculation of money which had been voted for public improvements, after it was appropriated,—and responsibility for the use or neglect of the veto power. If the people elected scoundrels who were shrewd and unprincipled enough to take advantage of their necessities, was the Mayor to say,—“Gentlemen, no more children are to be allowed school privileges; West Philadelphia must become a howling wilderness; whole families, yea, entire neighborhoods shall die of typhoid fever and diphtheria; commerce must be suspended for three months in the year; the city will get no further light or water;—because you are a pack of thieves, gentlemen, and I *suspect* you intend to steal a portion of this money?”

He could not *know* what had not happened,—and how long would this community have submitted to the dictum of a man who blocked the most important legislation, on mere suspicion? If he did not suspect, what other excuse had he? These necessities were unanimously and emphatically demanded, and the *only* questions he was called upon to answer in considering the use of the veto were, first:—Is the creation of a loan for this purpose, constitutional? Second:—is the object for which this money is to be expended, a

necessity? And third:—are the people sufficiently prosperous to afford it?

Could a negative answer be given to these queries in regard to either of the fourteen Loans just enumerated? And if not, how could Mayor Stokley consistently with his oath of office, veto them? If there is any grievance because of jobbery or robbery, it is not only weak but contemptible to charge it to the Mayor's refusal to veto!

In conclusion, let it not be forgotten that the city is indebted to the subject of this sketch, for services which can be recompensed by no honors or emoluments in the gift of its citizens,—and it will be an anxious day for Philadelphia when she has to depend upon an untried servant.

Respectability, culture, integrity and patriotism, have all distinguished many of his predecessors, but the lack of that *one talent* which he possesses to such an eminent degree—executive ability, moral courage, strength of will, force of character, tenacity of purpose, or sound common sense—by whatever name it may be called, whatever may be its nature,—the lack of that *one talent*—whose existence, experience only, can establish—has wrecked more than enough previous administrations, and will defame many yet to come! And it has also been clearly demonstrated, that physical courage has played no mean part in securing his success over many dangerous emergencies.

Resenting with rigorous severity any disrespect to his high position, he is yet always courteous, affable, frank and generous: but the ambition of his life is not, to be perpetually enveloped in silk stockings; nor to case in kid the strong hand of the law. It may not have been exactly *au fait* for his Honor to have lounged for four days and nights about a railroad depot in his shirt sleeves, when the weather and many other things were at blood heat,—but it is probable that the hearts of the people cherish just as much affection and regard for him, as though he had sat, covered with the concentrated dignity of the Aryan Race, in the luxurious Chair of State and received message after

message, of millions upon millions,—gone, until restored from their pittance or plenty!

He has had his full share of the enemies whose hate always compliments positive excellence. All the knaves whose villany he has stopped, most heartily curse him; a majority of those who have failed to persuade him to prostitute his office in their behalf, detest him with intensest fervor; others, who find him an insurmountable obstacle to their selfish ambitions, deery and abuse him. Some, ignorant, because they refuse to learn, censure him as responsible for that over which he has less control than they themselves; while a few, forgetful of the beam which may be in their own eyes, blame him for the short-comings of—possibly, friends,—perhaps mere acquaintances. Great will be their gladness when he is finally relieved from the cares and anxieties which he has so long and well borne; but the measure of their joy, will fathom the depths of their degradation and the peril awaiting our long-favored city.

May long life and continued health bring blessings to him! May the happiness of conscious merit, fill up the scant reward of empty honors tendered him! May gratitude, respect, esteem from all true men,—requite his labors for their good!

*Homo virtute et fide.*

## ADDENDA.

---

After this pamphlet was in type and the writer dilligently searching for evidences of political antipathy or extraordinary "intelligence" on the part of the compositor,—equal evils,—a member of the rival Committee (of One Hundred) interrupted him with the following:—  
"As I was riding into the city the other day, W——, whom you know is one of the most reliable and successful men in town, sat beside me. In the course of conversation he said, 'J——, I don't know how you stand with regard to Stokley, nor how your Committee stands, but when I was a youngster, and as full of the devil as it is lawful for a young man to be in this State, I dropped into John Chambers' Church one night. You know he was on the top of the heap at that time, and I went in more from curiosity than anything else. When I got inside it was pretty well crowded, but a benevolent-looking and kindly-spoken gentleman took charge of me, showed me a seat and all the courtesies possible, during the service, and afterwards poked several conundrums at me which led to his discovering that I was a great deal more likely to go to the bad than I was to get a respectable situation and behave myself. Well, he froze on to me, kept his hold of me for more than a month, put in the biggest kind of licks for me, until ashamed, I put them in for myself;—then he kept his eye on me for a long while afterwards, and made me what I am to-day. That gentleman's name was Stokley; and as he went for me, a poor, miserable, stranger, I'm making it my duty to see that everybody I can influence goes for him for anything he wants in this world, and what he deserves in the next.' Now you know I haven't taken Stokley stock at par, by a good deal, but W—— was evidently so much moved, and sincerely earnest, in his appreciation and gratitude, that I've about concluded



that I never gave the Mayor credit for half his worth. At any rate, I told W—— I'd make amends, and do the best I could when the proper time came." The writer expressed his thanks for the interruption, and a hope that this delightful little incident would be allowed to do like missionary work, with the remaining Ninety and Nine.

---

*To the*

COMMITTEE OF ONE, ETC. :

In reply to your request for minuter details of the engagement between the Police and the Railroad Rioters in July 1877, I remark that you have fallen into the error of stating that the decisive conflict between the police authorities and the mob at the West Philadelphia Depot took place on Monday, July 18th, 1877. It actually occurred on Sunday evening, July 17th; and the following account of the circumstances given to me shortly afterwards by an official who was present profoundly impressed my own mind, and will doubtless be interesting to others, as tending to show Mayor Stokley's foresight, soundness of judgment and unflinching courage in the presence of great danger.

A train of coal-oil cars filled with coal-oil was standing in the yard not far from the Depot, and the Superintendent of the yard, realizing the danger of allowing it to remain, yet satisfied that an attempt to move it would instantly provoke an outbreak of the angry mob which had gathered to the number of thousands and declared that not an engine or a train should be moved, concluded that the best thing to do was to allow the train to stand until morning, trusting that by that time the mob might be dispersed and that the train might then be removed to a place of greater safety. He therefore gave orders to bank the fires, take out the coupling pins and let the train remain where it was, and communicated his determination to Mayor Stokley. The Mayor, however, was satisfied, from the

information received from his officers, that the leaders of the mob intended to fire the train during the night and then to start another train or a number of cars near Mantua on the same track and, as there was a down grade all the way into the Depot, thus drive the burning cars into the buildings and set them on fire. He promptly informed the Superintendent that the orders must be countermanded and the oil-train immediately moved out of the yard and sent through the tunnel down to the Delaware river where, if fired, it could do no harm. This the Superintendent positively refused to do, declaring that such action would instantly precipitate the conflict which could hardly fail to result in the overpowering of the police and the destruction of property to the amount of millions of dollars in value. He also declared that if the Mayor undertook to move it he must do it through his own officers and at his own peril, and that on him would rest the sole responsibility for whatever consequences might happen.

It was a moment of grave peril, the outcome of which no man could foretell. It was evident that the Superintendent had not mistaken the temper of the mob—that the attempt to move the train, or to take an engine from the round-house would certainly bring on a conflict between a few hundred police officers armed with nothing but clubs and pistols, and many thousands of angry and desperate men, confident of their strength and assured of their ability to enforce their demands by the example of the rioters in Pittsburgh who had not only triumphed over the law but had imprisoned the State troops strong in numbers and discipline and armed with rifles and Gatling guns. It was a moment which demanded the exercise of the nicest judgment and the most unflinching moral and physical courage. For on the decision of that moment depended not only the safety of millions of dollars worth of property and probably the lives of many people, but also the determination of whether the law was stronger than the mob, or whether the mob should override the law, take possession of this great city and hold at its mercy public and private property and the safety of the lives and persons of its citizens.

Mayor Stokley must have fully realized all that hung upon his decision. For a moment or two he leaned his head down on the table before him, and when he raised it, two tears, making their way down his cheeks, told of the brief but terrible mental struggle through which he had passed. Then he said quietly, "While I am Mayor it shall never be said that a mob took out of my hands the government of this city. I will move the train myself and assume the responsibility for whatever happens." He at once telegraphed for all the officers in the city, divided them into three detachments, sending one along the west side of the track, another by Thirty-first Street, under the bridge, and the third over the Callowhill Street Bridge. When he was informed that these orders had been obeyed and that the detachments were at their appointed stations, he went out and directed several of his men to take an engine from the round-house, attach it to the coal-oil train and move it out of the yard, through the tunnel and down to the Delaware River. The instant the engine was seen coming from the round-house a number of the leaders sprang upon it, swearing that it should be put back, but they were speedily overpowered by the officers and subsequently arrested. Then the excited mob closed in on the tracks swearing that no train should run over them, and defying the officers of the law and the employees of the Company. At this moment the police, admirably handled by their brave officers, and acting under orders to use nothing but their clubs, charged on the mob, outnumbering them twenty to one, and drove them back in all directions for squares from the railroad, leaving its tracks clear and in possession of the Mayor and his small force of reserves. The back-bone of the riot was broken from that moment, for the mob was taught the power of the law when enforced by a brave and determined Mayor. The oil-train was moved out of the yard, switched off to the track leading down the river, and watched with anxious eyes until it had safely passed through the tunnel and no longer threatened the safety of the Depot.

Those who had it in charge, however, fearing that the noise of its

crossing the bridge might attract the mob in that direction and lead to an attack which they would be powerless to resist, left it standing on a siding near the Almshouse, where it was burnt by the mob on Monday, thus showing how accurate was Mayor Stokley's information and how correct his judgment as to what would have happened had it been suffered to stand in the yard near the Depot over night. On Monday there were only a few comparatively insignificant skirmishes with small bodies of rioters, and the city was saved.

Great generals have won immortality by the exercise of no higher degree of judgment, courage and foresight than that displayed by Mayor Stokley on that memorable occasion.

Truly Yours,

C. C.

PHILADELPHIA,  
December 15th, 1880.

The following communication is submitted through the courtesy of one of the gentlemen subscribing to it. It was handed to the writer the day before it was sent to the Mayor, and some time after this pamphlet was ready for the press, or it would have appeared in its proper place :

COOK & BROTHER,  
IMPORTERS OF HOSIERY GOODS,  
No. 53 North Eighth Street,

*Philadelphia, Dec. 10, 1880.*

HON. WM. S. STOKLEY :

*Sir* :—The undersigned, a Committee representing property owners in the vicinity of Eighth and Arch Streets, desire to convey to you our high sense of the service you have rendered the cause of public morality, by your refusal to license the Variety Theatre proposed to be established on Arch Street near Eighth, and to further express to you our thanks for the able manner in which you assisted us in our efforts to break up, what afterwards threatened to become a serious menace to our material interests and the morals of the community.

Respectfully Yours,

GEO. S. HARRIS,  
F. GUTEKUNST,  
RICHARD Y. COOK,  
THOS. W. PRICE.

# APPENDIX.

TABLE I.  
ROSTER OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

	1872.	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.	1878.	1879.
Chief, . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Fire Marshal, . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Captains, . . . . .	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Lieutenants, . . . . .	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
Sergeants, . . . . .	51	51	51	57	57	57	57	57
Detectives, . . . . .	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Turnkeys, . . . . .	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
Patrolmen, . . . . .	975	975	975	1175	1175	1175	1175	1175
Aggregate, . . . . .	1000	1000	1000	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Total, . . . . .	1092	1092	1092	1298	1298	1298	1298	1297

TABLE II.

	1872.	1873.	1874.	1875.
The total number of arrests by the Police Department were, . . . . .	40,368	30,400	32,472	34,978
	1876.	1877.	1878.	1879
	45,372	44,600	43,593	40,714

The number of arrests in 1872 over those in 1873 is due to the weeding-out processes instituted by Mayor Stokley. From 1873 the rate of increase is proportionately less than the increase of population, whether temporary, as in 1875, and 1876,—or as permanently, as shown in 1874 and 1879.

TABLE III.

	1872.	1873.	1874.	1875.
Stolen Property recovered by the Police Department, . . .	\$47,684.32	\$46,058.55	\$80,173.21	\$65,477.11
	1876.	1877.	1878.	1879.
	\$120,175.46	\$91,020.45	\$81,477.38	\$66,801.86

TABLE IV.

	1872.	1873.	1874.
Amount appropriated for Annual Support of Police Department, . . . .	\$1,133,378.50	\$1,153,159.90	\$1,226,509.55
Expended, . . . . .	1,106,977.32	1,141,677.42	1,184,066.53
Balance merged, . . . . .	\$26,701.18	\$11,482.48	\$42,443.02
	1875.	1876.	1877.
	\$1,464,226.90	\$1,738,601.70	\$1,340,856.50
	1,437,546.40	1,571,759.26	1,315,116.15
" " . . . . .	\$26,680.50	\$166,932.44	\$25,740.35
	1878.	1879.	
	\$1,323,265.37	\$1,316,315.37	. . . . .
	1,306,224.76	1,295,324.53	. . . . .
" " . . . . .	\$17,040.61	\$15,990.84	. . . . .

FORM 1.—PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION.

# Police Department of the City of Philadelphia,

S. W. CORNER FIFTH AND CHESTNUT STREETS.

Philadelphia,

187

*Statement of* ..... *an applicant for appointment as*  
*Patrolman of the Police Force of the City of Philadelphia, made*  
*for the purpose of testing his qualifications.*

QUESTIONS.	ANSWERS.
What is your name?.....	.....
In what year, day, and month were you Born?.....	.....
Where were you Born?.....	.....
If not born in the United States, have you been Naturalized, when and where?.....	.....
What is your Height?.....	.....
Have you been arrested for, or convicted of, any Crime?.....	.....
Have you resided in this State for one continuous year last past?...	.....
Where do you now reside?.....	.....
Are you Married?.....	.....
What Family have you?.....	.....
What has been your Occupation?.....	.....
Have you been in any Military service?..	.....
Were you Honorably discharged?.....	.....
Have you ever been a Policeman?.....	.....
Have you paid, or promised to pay, or give any money or other consideration to any person, directly or indirectly, for any aid or influence towards procuring your appointment?.....	.....



## SUPPLEMENT.

---

The Committee of One tenders thanks for the appreciation which has met its efforts to further good government in our city. It submits a second and enlarged edition, with reiterations of the unimpeachable accuracy of the statements made in its Report.

But one newspaper has taken exception to any of its assertions, and that denied any credit to Councilman Stokley for the abolition of the Volunteer Fire Department. Official records, testimony of participants and spectators, all availed nothing against that ancient fallacy, "a lie well stuck to is as good as the truth." The readers of this journal however, who possess sense enough to vote intelligently, know that about the date of the incident in question, its managers were striving with more or less success to obtain a limited stock of knowledge from country schools in their respective States. The spurious enterprise therefore, that endeavored to disguise natural and excusable ignorance with a veneer of dogmatic assurance, was really nothing but a harmless exhibition of the high development youth, mediocrity, and inexperience, may attain under an ordinary provincial training.

The description on pages 7 and 8 is not exaggerated, and every Philadelphian who was at that time old enough to comprehend the importance of the measure referred to, will so testify. For the benefit of younger citizens and those who have but lately taken up their residence amongst us, it may be well to explain that the Bill under discussion was entitled "An ordinance to create and organize a Paid Fire Department for the City of Philadelphia." The

Common Council had passed a resolution appointing five of its members to represent it in a Committee of Conference, and the gentlemen who had been named, were Messrs. Billington, Evans, Hancock, Simpson and Gill. On several previous occasions efforts had been made to abolish the old system but they were all still-born, and to William S. Stokley is due the passage of the resolution on the 21st day of November, 1876, which eventually resulted in the framing and enactment of the law establishing the Paid Department. Messrs. Hodgdon, Cattell, Ritchie, Smith, and King were the Select Councilmen designated as members of the Joint Committee. In justification of the accurateness of the narrative alluded to, Provost Stille of the University of Pennsylvania, who was present in the Chamber as guardian of the interests of that Institution, and on whom the dramatic episode made as profound an impression as upon the writer, deemed the occasion of sufficient moment to write the following letter :

2201 ST. JAMES PLACE, Dec. 20, 1880.

HON. WM. S. STOKLEY :

*My Dear Sir* :—I observe in the papers some controversy as to the part you took in the discussion of the Bill for the abolition of the Volunteer Fire Department.

I am in a position to speak confidently on this subject. When the Bill for that purpose was before Select Council, I was present watching the action of that body concerning the Bill then pending authorizing the sale to the University of the ground in West Philadelphia which it now occupies.

The Bill concerning the Volunteer Fire Department was taken up by the Select Council—you left the chair, and began to make a speech. The gallery above was filled with Firemen, who interrupted you with disorderly cries. You turned around, and raising your eyes to the crowd overhead, you spoke these words :—“ You who try to frighten

me are living illustrations of the truth of what I am saying! You come here as you go to fires,—to make a noise,—while your mothers are at the wash tubs trying to support you!”

I was astounded at such a speech coming from a man who, I was told, had then aspirations for public office.

I regarded it then, and I do now, as the boldest and bravest utterance in the cause of order I had ever heard from a man in such a position.

I have repeated the story a hundred times since, and I have told my friends, as I tell you now, that the man who shows courage of this high order shall always have my vote for Mayor as long as he is a candidate.

Very truly yours,

C. J. STILLE.

Though the Committee of One must incline to favor its own course of simply laying the merits and demerits of its favorites before the public, in preference to that adopted by its more ponderous colleague—of One Hundred, yet considering the real object of the scheme evolving the latter, and the motives of the spirit and conspirators who endeavored to control its action, it probably acted wisely under the circumstances. A majority of its members are certainly to be congratulated upon the possession of sufficient sagacity to profit by the instruction, and heed the advice given in this Report, and stamina enough to stand by their honest convictions. The crop may perhaps be premature, but it is written: Good seed sown on good ground shall not bring forth fruits for repentance!

That inexperience should breed mistakes and cause a wasteful expenditure of work and wealth, is to be expected—but only fools will judge these to be indications of weakness. There is plenty of power and to spare, and more than enough money for all legitimate expenses. Tax payers, rent payers, bread buyers,—all, are determined to no longer grope blindly in the labyrinth of crooked ways that our



masters have spent years in plotting: there are too many snares and pitfalls to be sprung at all important crises, and the beaten paths always turn and twist to finally lead to the same old goal!

The leaders of the dominant party will do well to accept the recommendations of the Committee of One Hundred. They have provoked so much distrust and disgust by their domineering dictation through a long interval of years that the citizens of this community have finally been driven into revolution.

Die they must politically, or surrender. The old threat of rule or ruin is worn too thin for any use. It is too late to bargain with the foe,—there will be nothing but liabilities to divide. Opposition, is mutiny, treachery, disaster, annihilation: allegiance is life, and—, with it hope!







LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 314 163 9

Hollinger  
pH 8.5